



PRESIDENT LINCOLN SPENT MUCH OF HIS TIME VISITING THE BIG ARMY OF OVER 100,000 MEN ENCAMPED BEHIND ARLINGTON, ACROSS THE POTOMAC RIVER FROM WASHINGTON. AGAIN AND AGAIN HIS AFTERNOON DRIVE WAS ACROSS THE LONG BRIDGE TO THE ARMY



IT WAS NOT ONLY AT CAMP THAT LINCOLN MET THE SOLDIERS. WASHINGTON WAS ALIVE WITH THEM AND THEY WERE NOT SLOW TO LEARN THAT THE PRESIDENT WAS EASY OF ACCESS—OFTEN FAR EASIER TO SEE THAN A DEPARTMENTAL CLERK WHO CAME FROM THEIR OWN PART OF THE COUNTRY.



BUT THE COUNTRY GREW TIRED OF MCCLELLAN'S INACTIVITY. THE DAILY MILITARY BULLETIN—"ALL QUIET ALONG THE POTOMAC"—BECAME A NATIONAL JOKE. MANY BARRACKS WERE GOING UP AROUND WASHINGTON; IT LOOKED AS IF THE ARMY WAS GOING INTO WINTER QUARTERS, INSTEAD OF ADVANCING. AT LAST LINCOLN BECAME IMPATIENT. "IF GENERAL MCCLELLAN DOESN'T WANT TO USE THE ARMY," HE SAID ONCE, "I SHOULD LIKE TO BORROW IT AND SEE IF IT CANNOT BE MADE TO DO SOMETHING."

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IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN

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Pictures by NICHOLAS AFONSKY
Text Edited by IDA M. TARBELL



JUST WHEN EVERYBODY THOUGHT MCCLELLAN WAS GOING TO ADVANCE, HE FELL ILL. THE PRESIDENT TOOK THIS OPPORTUNITY TO DO A LITTLE INVESTIGATING OF THE MILITARY SITUATION ON HIS OWN ACCOUNT. HE INTERVIEWED MANY OFFICERS TO GET THEIR VIEW OF THE STATE OF AFFAIRS.



MOREOVER, HE DETERMINED TO MASTER MILITARY SCIENCE. HE STUDIED THE REPORTS FROM THE VARIOUS FRONTS, TALKED WITH EXPERIENCED OFFICERS AND SPENT HOURS READING BOOKS ON MILITARY STRATEGY.

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IN JANUARY 27, 1862, LINCOLN FOR THE FIRST TIME USED HIS POWER AS COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE ARMY, ISSUING HIS GENERAL ORDER NO. 1—IT COMMANDED AN ADVANCE OF ALL THE UNION FORCES ON FEBRUARY 22, WASHINGTON'S BIRTHDAY. BUT MCCLELLAN OPPOSED THE MOVE AND SUCCEEDED IN DEFEATING IT. A LITTLE LATER NEWS CAME THAT THE CONFEDERATES HAD ABANDONED THE BATTERIES WHICH WERE TO HAVE

BEEN ATTACKED. MCCLELLAN, TO PROVE THAT THIS WAS NOT SO, ATTACKED, AND FOUND THEM EMPTY—EVEN THE GUNS THEY HAD LEFT BEHIND WERE OF PAINTED WOOD. THIS PROVED THE INFERIORITY OF THE ENEMY HE HAD SO FEARED AND ANGERED THE NATION—AND THE PRESIDENT. A FRIEND WHO INTERVIEWED HIM AT THIS MOMENT CAME AWAY TO SAY: "THE WAR WILL GO ON NOW. OLD ABE IS MAD."



MCCLELLAN, BRILLIANT ORGANIZER OF ARMIES, WAS A HESITATING LEADER. BUT HE FINALLY ADVANCED, BY WATER, TOWARDS RICHMOND. HIS FAILURE AFTER THREE MONTHS TO TAKE THE CITY, WAS ALMOST HEART-BREAKING TO LINCOLN.

IN THE SPRING OF 1862, THE PRESIDENT AND SECRETARIES STANTON AND CHASE WENT DOWN TO FORTRESS MONROE AND SPENT FIVE OR SIX DAYS GOING OVER THE FORTIFICATIONS AND THE CAMP.

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THE PRESIDENT AND THE GENERAL HAD MANY CONFERENCES, SIZING THINGS UP AND MAKING PLANS FOR FUTURE ACTIONS. BUT McCLELLAN'S MAIN INTEREST SEEMED TO BE IN A NON-MILITARY PLAN HE HAD FOR GETTING THE NATION OUT OF ITS DIFFICULTIES, AND LINCOLN RETURNED TO WASHINGTON DISCOURAGED.



JUST BEFORE THE GOVERNMENT PARTY RETURNED TO WASHINGTON THEY WITNESSED THE BLOWING UP OF THE MERRIMAC BY THE CONFEDERATES IN THE POTOMAC, WHERE SHE HAD BEEN ABANDONED BY THE UNION FORCES. AFTER THE FIGHT, LIEUTENANT WORDEN OF THE MERRIMAC WENT TO WASHINGTON. LINCOLN LEFT A CABINET MEETING TO SEE HIM. "MR. PRESIDENT," SAID WORDEN, "YOU DO ME GREAT HONOR BY THIS VISIT." "SIR," SAID LINCOLN, "I AM THE ONE WHO IS HONORED."

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THE FORTUNES OF WAR WERE GOING FIRST ONE WAY, THEN ANOTHER, AND LINCOLN FOLLOWED THE REPORTS FROM THE FRONT WITH THE GREATEST CARE. HE WENT HIMSELF TO THE WAR DEPARTMENT TELEGRAPH OFFICE EVERY DAY TO STUDY THE MESSAGES AS THEY CAME IN FROM THE FRONT. HIS FAVORITE PLACE THERE WAS AT ONE SIDE OF A LARGE FLAT-TOP DESK; AT THE OPPOSITE THE OPERATOR WORKING THE KEYS, HE WOULD SIT, OFTEN, ON THE EDGE OF HIS CHAIR, HIS RIGHT KNEE DRAGGED DOWN TO THE FLOOR.



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THE REAL MEANING OF WAR WAS NOW COMING HOME TO LINCOLN—IN THE SPRING AND SUMMER OF 1862. LONG LINES OF SOLDIERS FROM THE NORTH CONSTANTLY PASSED THROUGH WASHINGTON TO THE FRONT.



AND AS CONSTANTLY LONG TRAINS OF DEAD AND WOUNDED PASSED NORTH FROM THE BATTLE FIELDS, THROUGH WASHINGTON.



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LINCOLN ALWAYS LOVED CHILDREN. HE WOULD PLAY BALL FOR AN HOUR AT A TIME ON THE BROAD LAWNS OF THE HOME OF A FRIEND SEVEN MILES FROM WASHINGTON. THE CHILDREN

TOLD OF HOW LONG HIS STRIDES WERE, HOW HIS COAT TAILS STUCK OUT BEHIND HIM, AND HOW THEY TRIED TO HIT HIM WITH THE BALL AS HE RAN THE BASES. AND HE ENJOYED IT ALL AS MUCH AS THEY



HIS OWN TWO YOUNG SONS GAVE HIM A TREMENDOUS DEAL OF HAPPINESS. HE WAS FULL OF ANECDOTES OF THEM. ONE MORNING THE PRESIDENT MET A COMMISSION COME TO DISCUSS THE WAR, WITH THE LAUGHING ANNOUNCEMENT THAT THE WHITE HOUSE WAS IN A STATE OF FEVERISH EXCITEMENT. ONE OF THE BOYS HAD THAT MORNING ANNOUNCED THAT THE CAT HAD KITTENS—THE OTHER THAT THE DOG HAD PUPPIES.



IN FEBRUARY, 1862, BOTH BOYS BECAME DESPERATELY ILL. LINCOLN WOULD SLIP AWAY FROM THE MOST IMPORTANT WORK TO WATCH BY THEIR BEDS. EVERY NIGHT HE KEPT VIGIL BY THEIR SIDES. ON THE TWENTIETH OF THE MONTH WILLIE, THE OLDER OF THE TWO, DIED. THE PRESIDENT WAS HEART-BROKEN, AND THOUGH HE QUICKLY PULLED HIMSELF TOGETHER, THE BLOW AGED HIM GREATLY.



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AFTER THE SAD DEATH OF WILLIE LINCOLN THE PRESIDENT DEVOTED HIMSELF ESPECIALLY TO LITTLE TAD, WHO USED OFTEN TO RIDE ABOUT THE WHITE HOUSE ON HIS FATHER'S SHOULDERS.



THE LITTLE BOY WOULD RUN INTO HIS FATHER'S OFFICE WHILE MOST IMPORTANT CONFERENCES WERE GOING ON. SOMETIMES HE WOULD FALL ASLEEP ON THE FLOOR AT HIS FATHER'S FEET. AND WHEN THE CONFERENCE WAS OVER THE PRESIDENT WOULD TENDERLY CARRY THE SLEEPING CHILD OFF TO BED.



IN THE SUMMER WHILE HE WAS PRESIDENT, LINCOLN SPENT THE NIGHTS AT A COTTAGE AT THE SOLDIERS' HOME, A LITTLE NORTH OF THE CITY. TAD HAD SOME GOATS AT THE SOLDIERS' HOME AND WHEN HE WAS AWAY WITH HIS MOTHER LINCOLN WROTE TO HIS WIFE: "TELL TAD THAT POOR NANNY GOAT IS LOST. THE GARDENER KEPT COMPLAINING THAT

SHE DESTROYED THE FLOWERS, SO WE BROUGHT HER DOWN TO THE WHITE HOUSE AND SHE DISAPPEARED." BUT LATER TAD WAS MADE HAPPY WITH A WHOLE FAMILY OF GOATS. WHEN HE WAS AWAY AGAIN WITH HIS MOTHER, LINCOLN TELEGRAPHED HIS WIFE: "TELL TAD THE GOATS AND FATHER ARE WELL—ESPECIALLY THE GOATS."